

Dear Councillors,

We urge you to read this paper and consider the suggested action.

The following report extracts encapsulate the gravity and urgency of the climate and biodiversity crisis that we face.

WEF – World Economic Forum - *Global risks report 2019. 15/01/2019*

Environmental risks continue to dominate the results of the annual Global Risks Perception Survey (GRPS). This year, they accounted for **three of the top five risks by likelihood and four by impact**. Survey respondents are increasingly worried about environmental policy failure. The results of climate inaction are becoming increasingly clear. The accelerating pace of biodiversity loss is a particular concern. Species abundance is down by 60% since 1970. In the human food chain, biodiversity loss is affecting health and socioeconomic development, with implications for well-being, productivity, and even regional security.

IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change *Fifth assessment report 2014*

Warming of the atmosphere and ocean system is unequivocal. Many of the associated impacts such as sea level change (among other metrics) have occurred since 1950 at rates unprecedented in the historical record. There is a clear human influence on the climate.

IPCC pointed out that **the longer we wait to reduce our emissions, the more expensive it will become**.

Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C (SR15) 08/10/18

Human activities are estimated to have caused approximately 1.0°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels. Global warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate. Warming from anthropogenic emissions from the pre-industrial period to the present will persist for **centuries to millennia** and will continue to cause further long-term changes in the climate system, such as sea level rise, with associated impacts.

IPPR – Institute for Public Policy Research

This is a crisis: facing up to the age of environmental breakdown. 12/02/19

Mainstream political and policy debates have failed to recognise that human impacts on the environment have reached a critical stage, potentially eroding the conditions upon which socioeconomic stability is possible.

Human-induced environmental change is occurring at an unprecedented scale and pace and the window of opportunity to avoid catastrophic outcomes in societies around the world is rapidly closing. These outcomes include economic instability, large-scale involuntary migration, conflict, famine and the potential collapse of social and economic systems. **The historical disregard of environmental considerations in most areas of policy has been a catastrophic mistake.**

What can the Isle of Wight council do?

We urge councillors to put differences aside, work together and follow the lead taken by other councils by declaring a climate emergency and associated measures.

Councils that have declared a 'climate emergency' as of 01-Mar-2019 include:

Date	Council	Population	Leadership
03-Nov-18	Bristol City Council	535,907	
28-Nov-18	Trafford Council	223,288	
03-Dec-18	Totnes Town Council	8,076	Town
05-Dec-18	Frome Town Council	26,203	Town
06-Dec-18	Forest of Dean District C	86,000	
12-Dec-18	Greater London Authority	8,174,000	
13-Dec-18	Stroud District Council	116,627	
13-Dec-18	Brighton and Hove City C	273,369	
17-Dec-18	Oswestry Town Council	17,105	Town
17-Dec-18	Machynlleth Town Council	2,235	Town
18-Dec-18	Langport Town Council	2,872	Town
07-Jan-19	Scarborough Borough Council	107,902	
15-Jan-19	Bradford District Council	534,000	
16-Jan-19	Kirklees Council	423,000	
22-Jan-19	Cornwall Council	563,600	
23-Jan-19	Milton Keynes Council	229,941	
23-Jan-19	Lambeth Council	324,431	
24-Jan-19	Powys County Council	132,500	
24-Jan-19	Leicester City Council	329,839	
28-Jan-19	Oxford City Council	150,200	
28-Jan-19	Falmouth Town Council	21,797	Town
29-Jan-19	Norwich City Council	141,300	
30-Jan-19	Lancaster City Council	142,500	
30-Jan-19	Calderdale Borough Council	208,402	
06-Feb-19	Sheffield City Council	577,800	
07-Feb-19	Edinburgh City Council	513,210	
13-Feb-19	Tywyn Town Council	3,264	Town
13-Feb-19	Vale of White Horse District Council	126,663	
13-Feb-19	Glastonbury TC	8,932	Town
18-Feb-19	Cheltenham Borough Council	117,100	
19-Feb-19	North Somerset District	212,800	
20-Feb-19	Carmarthenshire County	185,600	
20-Feb-19	Somerset County	555,200	
21-Feb-19	Somerset West and Taunton	149,800	
21-Feb-19	Cambridge City Council	123,867	
21-Feb-19	Devon County Council	1,185,500	
25-Feb-19	Mendip District Council	111,724	
26-Feb-19	Wiltshire Council	435,000	
26-Feb-19	Reading Borough Council	163,100	

Councils of every political stripe are facing the reality of climate change with very similar motions, but with consideration the political balance on the Isle of Wight, you will find below extracts from the minutes of full council meetings of three Conservative majority councils: Scarborough, Forest of Dean and Vale of White horse. The links to the full papers can also be found below.

Forest of Dean – motion passed unanimously on 6th Jan.

Full Council calls on Council to:

- 1. Declare a 'Climate Emergency';*
- 2. Aim to make the Forest of Dean District Council and the district carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3), Ref 4*
- 3. Call on the Government and other relevant organisations and partners to provide the powers, resources and funding to successfully meet the 2030 target;*
- 4. Subject to receiving the necessary powers, resources and funding to:*
 - a) Work with other councils and organisations (both within the UK and internationally) to determine and implement best practice methods to limit Global Warming to less than 1.5C; Ref 5; and*
 - b) Ask the Leader to initiate work with partners across the district, county and region to help deliver carbon neutrality through all relevant strategies and plans.*
- 5. As a first step, to actively investigate using a local green energy company as the Council's energy provider.*

Scarborough – motion passed unanimously on 7th Jan.

Full Council resolves to:

1. Declare a 'Climate Emergency';
2. Pledge to do everything within the Council's power to make the Borough of Scarborough carbon neutral by 2030.
3. Call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible;
4. Work with other governments (both within the UK and internationally) to determine and implement best practice methods to limit Global Warming to less than 1.5°C;
5. Continue to work with partners across the borough and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans;
6. Submit a bid as part of the Council's budget setting process for an additional £80,000 to fund a 'Sustainability' Officer Post for a two year period to champion the scoping and delivery of the Borough Council's Carbon Neutral 2030 commitment.

It is proposed that the additional cost is funded from the overachieved budget savings in 2019/20 currently held in the budget proposals as a contingency.

Additionally this Council calls on the Leader of the Council to write to North Yorkshire County Council urging them to recognise the climate emergency and take a lead, both in their own operations and in working with the Districts, to move as rapidly as possible to carbon neutrality.

Vale of white horse district – motion passed on 13th Feb.

In light of the above, the Council therefore agrees to:

1. Join other councils in declaring a Climate Emergency;
2. Ask the leader to write to the Secretary of State requesting that they provide the necessary powers and resources to make local action on climate change easier;
3. Request that, in light of the recent IPCC report and the latest Vale of White Horse District Council data (published June 2018), officers review the council's Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Plan with the aim of bringing a report to Cabinet in the autumn of 2019, after consideration by Scrutiny. The review should include the option of adopting an early carbon neutral target for the Vale, and proposals for regular reporting to Scrutiny Committee the progress with the strategy and plan;
4. Ask officers to ensure that as the council's policies are routinely reviewed, specific consideration is given to how policies, and our related decisions and actions, affect our contribution to climate change, and where necessary, update these policies to reduce our impact wherever possible;
5. Ask officers to provide the cost and the most appropriate training for members and officers about how to promote carbon neutral policies for future consideration by Cabinet;
4. Continue to work with partners across the district, county and wider region to deliver widespread carbon reductions.

Forest of Dean full paper:

<http://meetings.fdean.gov.uk/documents/g1781/Printed%20minutes%2006th-Dec-2018%2019.00%20Full%20Council.pdf?T=1>

Scarborough full paper:

<https://democracy.scarborough.gov.uk/documents/g10551/Printed%20minutes%2007th-Jan-2019%2014.00%20Council.pdf?T=1>

Vale of White Horse:

Minutes still to be published.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is fundamental to human well-being and a sustainable future for the Island.

A healthy biodiversity is crucial to tackling climate change. By degrading the ecology of our rural and urban environment, we undermine the crucial role that nature plays in maintaining the resilience of the places where we live, work and visit.

Biodiversity is integral to the cultural and economic identity of the Isle of Wight. The life of our communities is embedded in the ecosystem of the Island and cannot be separated.

WWF – World Wildlife Fund

Living planet report 2018. 28/10/18

“the future of millions of species on Earth seems not to have captured the imagination or attention of the world’s leaders enough to catalyse the change necessary. We need to **radically escalate the political relevance of nature** and galvanize a cohesive movement across state and non-state actors to drive change, to ensure that public and private decision-makers understand that business as usual is not an option.”

Plummeting numbers of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds and fish around the world are an urgent sign that nature needs life support. Our Living Planet Report 2018 shows population sizes of wildlife decreased by 60% globally between 1970 and 2014.

Worldwide decline of the entomofauna: A review of its drivers

Biological Conservation Volume 232, April 2019, Pages 8-27

Abstract: Biodiversity of insects is threatened worldwide.... work reveals dramatic rates of decline that may lead to the extinction of 40% of the world's insect species over the next few decades.... The main drivers of species declines appear to be in order of importance: i) habitat loss and conversion to intensive agriculture and urbanisation; ii) pollution, mainly that by synthetic pesticides and fertilisers; iii) biological factors, including pathogens and introduced species; and iv) climate change.

Highlights:

- Over 40% of insect species are threatened with extinction.
 - Lepidoptera (butterflies, moths), Hymenoptera (bees, wasps, ants) and dung beetles (Coleoptera) are the taxa most affected.
 - Four aquatic taxa are imperilled and have already lost a large proportion of species.
 - Habitat loss by conversion to intensive agriculture is the main driver of the declines.
 - Agro-chemical pollutants, invasive species and climate change are additional causes.
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Food and Agriculture organisation of the United Nations

State of the world's biodiversity for food and agriculture 22/02/19

Highlights:

The first-ever report of its kind presents mounting and worrying evidence that the biodiversity that underpins our food systems is disappearing – putting the future of our food, livelihoods, health and environment under severe threat.

“Less biodiversity means that plants and animals are more vulnerable to pests and diseases. Compounded by our reliance on fewer and fewer species to feed ourselves, the increasing loss of biodiversity for food and agriculture puts food security and nutrition at risk,” said FAO’s Director-General José Graziano da Silva.

Many associated biodiversity species are also under severe threat. These include birds, bats and insects that help control pests and diseases, soil biodiversity, and wild pollinators – such as bees, butterflies, bats and birds.

Forests, rangelands, mangroves, seagrass meadows, coral reefs and wetlands in general – key ecosystems that deliver numerous services essential to food and agriculture and are home to countless species – are also rapidly declining.

The report calls on governments and the international community to do more to strengthen enabling frameworks, create incentives and benefit-sharing measures, promote pro-biodiversity initiatives and address the core drivers of biodiversity loss.

In light of this situation we implore the council to give serious consideration to developing ground-breaking policy to achieve the following:

- **Resolve to recognise the urgency and gravity of the biodiversity crisis and to recognise the most up to date science and advice.**
- **Commit to eliminating pesticides from public parks, school grounds and residential areas.**
- **Urgently set meaningful, measurable targets for enriching the Island’s public estate, delivering gains for biodiversity in the management and maintenance of its land and buildings through practical achievable actions.**
- **Invest in biodiversity by advocating for wildlife across its policies and programmes.**
- **Ensure that due consideration of the implications of the biodiversity crisis is given in all decisions of the council.**